

Course Title: **Africa, Islam and the Contemporary World** (21:510-365)

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Texts Required:

1. Huston Smith. *Islam: A Concise Introduction*. HarperSanfrancisco, 2001
2. Said Samatar. *Africa, Islam and the Contemporary World*(A Reader), PortaPrint, 30 Halsey St., Phone (973)622-1828
3. Strunk, William. *Elements of Style*. The American Heritage Book of English Usage. 1986. Principal requirements of plain English style. Focuses on the rules of usage in literature, composition and grammar

Additional material to be handed out in class

Course Description: This is a study of the impact of Islam on the evolution of African societies, and its continuing influence on African life and lore. It examines the effects of this Semitic religion on the African worldview, in particular on African temper and tastes in Religion (ancestral veneration, magic, sorcery and related phenomena), social dynamics (birth, death, marriage, rules of property inheritance, etc), and in political thought. Further, the course explores how African Muslims, as part of the Ummah, or the world Islamic community of faith, relate to global trends in Islam. E.g. remember that the attack on the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania(1998) and the coordinated bombing of the Israel-owned Paradise Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya and the near-miss missile assault on an Israeli tourist plane loaded with passengers on the same day (2002) were carried out by African Muslim disciples of Osama Bin Laden.

It should be added that “Africa, Islam and the Contemporary World” has recently been designated an “English Intensive” course. This means that, in addition to the study of Islam in tropical Africa, the principles of English usage, style and grammar will play a major part in the course. A detailed explanation of all this entails to be presented in class.

Course Requirements

1. Regular attendance and class participation
2. Completion of two tests (a midterm and a final)
3. Paper (5 pages, typed, double-spaced)
4. 5 unexcused absences lower your grade by one letter

Grading method

1. 80. based on two tests (midterm 40%, final 40%)
2. 5% map
3. 5% report on one African country
4. 5% paper
5. 5% good citizen

Week I. Introductory matters

- “ II. What Is Islam? A personal Faith? A Religion? A Social System? A Political Movement? All of these? Houston. Islam. Read whole bk.
- “ III. Islamic Way of Thinking, pp. 156-62(reader)  
IV Life of Muhammad 164-76 (reader)  
V. Trans-Saharan and the and the kingdom of Ghana, pp. 77-104 (reader)  
VI. The Juula and the Expansion of Islam into the Forest, pp. 94-115(reader)  
VII. West Africa in the nineteenth century, 224-230(reader)  
VIII. Precolonial Islam in the Eastern Sudan, Pp. 117-129(reader)  
IX. Sufi Brotherhoods in Africa, Pp. 441-465(reader)  
X. Sheikh Uways Muhammad of Baraawe, Pp. 49-71(reader)  
XI. Occupation and Resistance: The Rise of the Somali Dervishes, Pp. 90-136(reader)